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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/11/2026
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [PINR](#) [KN](#) [JA](#)
SUBJECT: US-JAPAN COORDINATION ON DPRK MISSILES LAUNCHES:
LESSONS LEARNED

Classified By: AMBASSADOR J. THOMAS SCHIEFFER. REASON:1.4(B)(D)

¶1. (S) Summary: A U.S.-Japan inter-agency meeting August 9 concluded that bilateral coordination in the period surrounding the July DPRK missile launches was extremely good, but room for improvement remained. The Japanese side reiterated their strong desire to learn what steps the USG was contemplating against North Korea in accordance with UNSCR 1695. Both sides agreed that additional North Korean actions, without much advance warning, should not be ruled out. It was therefore imperative to continue close bilateral coordination, including an early September meeting that would include the Ambassador, Japan Defense Agency Minister Nukaga and a senior Foreign Ministry official such as VFM Yachi. End Summary.

¶2. (S) MOFA Deputy Vice Minister for Foreign Policy Masaharu Kohno and DCM Donovan co-chaired a bilateral, inter-agency meeting on August 9 to examine U.S.-Japan coordination and cooperation during the period preceding, during, and following the July 5 North Korean missile launches. Both sides agreed that bilateral cooperation had been extremely good and virtually unprecedented, but that room for improvement remained.

¶3. (S) Asked to speak first, the DCM said that while bilateral coordination had been very good, "we probably aren't done yet," referring to the likelihood that North Korea would present new challenges to the alliance. The DCM noted that with indications of pre-launch preparations visible well in advance, Kim Jong-il had given the U.S. and Japan time to prepare. "We might not have the same luxury next time," he pointed out. The DCM suggested both sides look at areas where things might be done better, as well as other issues, in preparation for a proposed senior-level meeting in early September that would include Ambassador Schieffer, JDA Minister Nukaga and a senior MOFA official such as VFM Yachi.

¶4. (S) DVM Kohno cited the comments of Foreign Minister Aso, who praised the "wonderful" cooperation between the U.S. and Japan in Tokyo and Washington, as well as with Ambassador Bolton in New York. FM Aso had highlighted the importance of the many direct conversations between himself and the Secretary, as well as between NSA Hadley and Chief Cabinet

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Secretary Abe, that contributed to keeping the two sides in

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sync. He echoed the DCM's comments about future challenges, saying North Korea had maintained silence since the missile launches, and that Japan did not know what the DPRK might do next. Whatever it might be, it could threaten not only

Japan, but others in the region and beyond.

15. (S) The Prime Minister's office was coordinating an inter-agency study of possible additional measures to take against the DPRK, in accordance with UNSCR 1695, particularly paragraph four, DVM Kohno related. He noted that the government of Japan would designate 12 entities in this regard, adding that as Japan went further, and particularly as MOFA coordinated with other ministries, it would be very important to know where the USG was heading. In this regard, Kohno said he understood there had been a USG inter-agency meeting on the subject August 8 and asked for a quick readout. The Japanese government's overall policy approach would be to apply pressure on North Korea, while at the same time holding open the door for dialogue, including a resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

16. (S) MOFA Director-General for Intelligence and Analysis Haruhisa Takeuchi commented that intelligence cooperation had been very good, including cooperation among Japanese government agencies. Throughout the process, however, Japan had difficulty discerning DPRK intentions. Embassy RAS chief provided an overview of the current situation in North Korea, lauded our successful cooperation, and highlighted a few areas for future improvement. (Additional details will be reported in a separate channel.)

17. (S) MOFA Director-General for North American Affairs Chikao Kawai focused his remarks on Japan's need for missile defense (MD). He said the U.S. would be "bringing in the USS Shiloh," and noted placement of the X-band radar in Aomori Prefecture, but concluded that more needed to be done bilaterally on MD. JDA Policy Division Director Ro Manabe picked up on the subject, saying JDA was taking action to acquire PAC-3 and additional AEGIS capability, but needed to accelerate procurement as much as possible on PAC-3s, where most of the components were produced by U.S. firms. The DCM noted that those procurement issues were being worked in the U.S. and that the embassy would continue to support those

efforts. Manabe also referred to the USS Shiloh deployment, but asked that the U.S. deploy additional systems to Japan, if possible, at least until Japan acquires its own MD systems. Finally, he suggested that the two sides accelerate work on a bilateral "war-fighting conplan," citing the lack of any plan to attack an enemy missile base, if the need arose. DG Kawai said that MD was important, but only part of the equation, and he echoed the need for discussions on "contingency planning" as soon as possible.

18. (S) The DCM suggested that the 1997 US-Japan Defense Guidelines provided a reference for cooperation on operational matters, and that the coordination during the period surrounding the DPRK missile launches had been a virtual "de-facto" execution of the Guidelines' Bilateral Coordination Mechanism. USFJ J5 Col. Paul Vosti echoed the Guidelines' call for a Bilateral Coordination Mechanism, but pointed out that while USFJ thought the bilateral centers should stand up very early, it had not been clear on the Japanese side.

19. (S) USFJ Chief of Staff COL Brown noted that SDX was coming on line and that the objective was to have a seamless mutual sharing of information in order to achieve a common operational picture. He pointed out that when this was achieved down to the level of individual ships, it had been very welcome to the operators.

110. (S) DVM Kohno flagged another "big issue" for consideration: How to work, and how deeply to work, with China? The DCM agreed we needed to look at how to work with China. He observed that our successful effort to get China on board with the UNSC resolution resulted from good coordination among Tokyo, Washington and New York. China, he continued, had seen that the US-Japan alliance was strong, a powerful message to China.

111. (S) MOFA Deputy DG for Intelligence and Analysis Shigeo

Matsutomi noted what he called four "minor points" for consideration: 1) the GOJ had incorrectly anticipated that the missile launches would be in the daytime; 2) there had been large differences between US and Japanese weather forecasts; 3) the GOJ had made a serious mistake in its calculation of the length of the Taepodong missile; and 4) the GOJ still had come to no conclusion about the DPRK's intentions, i.e., whether the launches had been a message to the world, or whether it may also have been for domestic consumption and/or for the ROK or China.

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